

## Evolution in Europe: A Pause in Baltic Passions

### *Lithuanians Debating a Freeze on Independence*

VILNIUS, Lithuania, June 28 (AP) — Lithuania's legislators began debating a freeze of their declaration of independence today, and some questioned whether President Mikhail S. Gorbachev had the credibility or staying power to stick to a compromise.

The Lithuanian Prime Minister, Kazimiera Prunskiene, told the republic's Parliament that Mr. Gorbachev had promised to end an economic blockade and begin negotiations if Lith-

uania placed a moratorium on the March 11 declaration of independence.

She suggested a resolution that would impose a three-month moratorium, to take effect when negotiations with the Kremlin actually started.

Mrs. Prunskiene told Parliament that Mr. Gorbachev would not require a freeze on laws adopted after the declaration of independence. One of those replaced the Soviet Constitution with a Lithuanian version.

"The moratorium is only on the declaration of independence, not on all the other acts," Mrs. Prunskiene said. "It is a political statement. The status of Lithuania doesn't change."

Parliament adjourned Thursday without making a decision. There was no indication when it would act.

Mrs. Prunskiene's assurances were not enough for many legislators. "We fear that if we accept this, Moscow would immediately install an alterna-

tive government," said Klemas Inta. "We fear that they could deceive us."

Lithuania was an independent country between the world wars but was occupied by Soviet troops in 1940 and absorbed into the Soviet Union.

"There is a panic in the country that we might be tricked," said a newspaper editor, Algis Cekuolis.

About 50,000 workers have lost their jobs since Moscow cut all oil, most natural gas and other raw materials and manufactured goods 10 weeks ago.

Mrs. Prunskiene told Parliament that it must accept a deal with Moscow

because the West is demanding a compromise and the economic blockade could turn Lithuania into a disaster area by winter.

The Kremlin said on Tuesday that talks with Lithuania could not begin until the republic declared a moratorium on its independence declaration.

Lithuania's President, Vytautas Landsbergis, did not endorse a compromise but said, "It's most important to get the negotiations started." He said he understood from talks with President Gorbachev that the economic blockade would be lifted im-

mediately after the moratorium went into effect.

Mr. Landsbergis said the Lithuanians wanted to choose the best conditions for critical talks over how independence could be achieved.

Some leaders, including President Landsbergis, say the Soviet political landscape is changing so rapidly that Lithuania might do better to wait.

A congress of the Soviet Communist Party is scheduled to begin Monday in Moscow. Mr. Gorbachev is likely to face bitter criticism from both traditional Communists and reformers and may face a challenge to his leadership.